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Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 VO-05
CA-01 INSE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 ICAE-00
INRE-00 /057 W
----------033567 060636Z /16
O 060521Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0241
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF
SUBJ: IPP-78 INDOCHINA REFUGEES ON BOARD BRITISH SHIP SIBONGA

REF: HONG KONG 5717

1. HONG KONG POLITICAL ADVISOR WILSON CONTACTED US REGARDING SIBONGA. HE SAID THAT THE 21 REFUGEES FOR FRANCE AND AUSTRALIA WERE ALLOWED OFF THE SHIP, BUT THAT THE 17 FOR US AND UK ARE STILL ON BOARD AND THAT SHIP IS DEPARTING BANGKOK EARLY AFTERNOON MAY 6 FOR HONG KONG. HE SAID UNHCR BANGKOK AND BRITISH EMBASSY HAVE TRIED GET THESE 17 OFF THE SHIP, INCLUDING UK GUARANTEE OF RESETTLEMENT FOR ALL 38 IF THEY ARE NOT ACCEPTED BY OTHER COUNTRIES, BUT THAI AUTHORITIES HAVE NOT RESPONDED. WILSON CONCERNED WITH THIS DEVELOPMENT NOTING THAT FIRST ASYLUM SHOULD BE GRANTED IN BANGKOK SINCE IT WAS PORT OF CALL FOR SIBONGA.

2. WILSON BELIEVES THAT HONG KONG CANNOT GRANT THESE 17 REFUGEES FIRST ASYLUM SINCE THIS WOULD BE BAD PRECEDENT. HE SAID THAT SIBONGA CAN BE EXPECTED ARRIVE HERE ON MAY 8 AND THAT THE 7
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REFUGEES FOR UK WILL BE GIVEN TRANSIT STATUS IN HONG KONG FOR MOVEMENT WITHIN FOUR DAYS TO UK. HE ASKED THAT THE 10 REFUGEES ALLEGEDLY FOR U.S. ALSO BE MOVED OUT OF HONG KONG WITHIN FOUR DAYS.

3. CONSUL GENERAL EXPLAINED TO WILSON THAT WE STILL HAVE NO INFORMATION ON THIS, BUT UNDER U.S. LAW WE CANNOT GIVE ANY GUARANTEE AND THAT LENGTH OF TIME INVOLVED IN SPONSORSHIP

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SEARCH PRECLUDES REPID MOVEMENT TO U.S. EVEN IF ALL 10
WERE FOUND ELIGIBLE.

4. WILSON THEN NOTED THAT ONLY THREE POSSIBILTIES ARE OPEN:
(1) REFUSE TO ALLOW THE 17 TO LAND HERE AND LET SIBONGA PROCEED
TO NEXT PORTS OF CALL, JAPAN AND U.S. (CONSUL GENERAL ADVISED
AGAINST THIS; (2) ALLOW ALL 17 TO GET OF SIBONGA IN TRANSIT FOR
MOVEMENT TO UK AS COUNTRY OF FIRST ASYLUM (USING PREDECENT
OF NORWEGIAN TANKER STOVE); AND (3) MOVING THE 7 TO UK WITHIN
FOUR DAYS AND GRANTING FIRST ASLYUM IN HONG KONG TO THE 10 FOR
US. WE BELIEVE THAT HONG KONG GOVT WILL RECOMMEND OPTION TWO
TO LONDON UNLESS SOMETHING CHANGES. WILSON COMMENTED TO CONSUL
GENERAL THAT IN THIS EVENT HE HOPED USG WOULD COOPERATE IN TAKING
THOSE WILLING AND ELIGIBLE TO GO TO U.S.

5. ICEM HONG KONG INFORMS US IT HAS NO INFORMATION FROM
UNHCR, BUT AT REQUEST OF HONG KONG IMMIGRATION DEPT SAID ICEM
COULD MOVE THE 7 REFUGEES TO UK IN THREE DAYS.

6. UNRELATED TO SITUATION ABOVE, THREE JUNKS WITH TOTAL OF 45
REFUGEES ARRIVED IN HONG KONG LAST NIGHT AND TODAY AND HAVE BEEN
GRANTED FIRST ASYLUM.

7. REQUEST INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FROM DEPT
SHOESMITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, SEA RESCUES, SIBONGA M/V
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Disposition Reason:
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From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780586/aaaacvqg.tel
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Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: bf603aa3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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Retention: 0
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Review Content Flags:
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